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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

BOUCHELLE, LAURA A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3763

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

12/07/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/748,811	Applicant(s) FUIMAONO ET AL.	
	Examiner LAURA A. BOUCHELLE	Art Unit 3763	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 September 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 1-23, 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buelna et al (US 5605539) in view of Gentelia et al (US 5267994). Buelna discloses an irrigation probe comprising a rigid probe body 22 that is generally rigid (abstract), a non retractable electrode 28 defining an inner cavity and having at least one irrigation opening 30, the electrode fixedly attached to the distal end of the probe body, And a means for introducing fluid into the inner cavity including an infusion tube 36 extending though the probe body 22. See Fig. 2. The probe body, infusion tube, and electrode comprise a single unitary, generally hollow body. See Fig. 2. The device includes a handle 34.
3. Claims 1, 7, 28 differ from Buelna in calling for the electrode form an angle with the distal end of the probe body. Gentelia teaches a probe body having an electrode 20C at the distal end attached at an angle relative to the distal end of the probe body to allow for increased control and reduced damage to surrounding tissues (col. 3, lines 45-50). The “single location” is interpreted to be the bottom side of the electrode. The single location needn’t be a single point. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the device of Buelna to include an electrode attached at an angle as taught by Gentelia to allow for increased control of the electrode and reduced damage to surround tissue.
4. Claim 9 calls for a non-conductive sheath covering a portion of the tubular body. Gentelia discloses that the probe body is made of a non-conductive material to protect the patient

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from accidental shocks (col. 4, lines 25-27). The sheath is considered to be a portion of the probe body. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the device of Buelna to include a non-conductive sheath as taught by Gentelia to shield the patient from accidental shocks.

5. Claims 10-12 differ from Buelna in calling for the diameter of the probe. Buelna teaches that the probe has a diameter of 10mm (.39 in) to allow for the probe to be used with conventional laproscopic tools (col. 4, lines 14-16). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the device of Buelna to have a diameter of about 0.4 inches as taught by Gentelia to allow the probe to be used with standard laproscopic tools.

6. Claim 14 calls for the fluid to be introduced into the probe using flexible plastic tubing. Buelna is silent as to the tubing used for delivering the infusion fluid. However, it is standard in the art to use flexible plastic tubing for its biocompatibility and non-reactiveness, and it allows for the handheld tool to be moved freely while staying firmly attached to the fluid source. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the device of Buelna to include a flexible plastic tube to deliver irrigation fluid to the tube body because such is the standard in the art.

7. Claims 24-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buelna in view of Gentelia as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Haissaguerre et al (US 6068629). The probe of Buelna may include a first and second lumens. See Fig. 4A. Claim 24 differs from the teachings above in calling for the probe to include a stiffening wire.

Haissaguerre teaches a probe body having an electrode on the distal end and further including a

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stiffening wire 66 that allows the user to manipulate and adjust the probe body during use (Col. 7, lines 48-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to include a stiffening wire extending through the second lumen as taught by Haissaguerre to allow the user to manipulate and adjust the probe body during use.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 9/3/09 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argued that Gentelia does not disclose that the electrode is rigidly attached to the distal end of the catheter at a single location between the first and second ends. The examiner disagrees. As can be seen in Fig. 5C, the electrode 20C is attached to the probe at the bottom surface of the electrode which is considered to be a single location. The claim does not require that the electrode is attached at a single point. A single location is interpreted to be any length of the electrode as long as the contact is contiguous.

Conclusion

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

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however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LAURA A. BOUCHELLE whose telephone number is (571)272-2125. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8-4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nicholas Lucchesi can be reached on 517-272-4977. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Laura A Bouchelle
Examiner
Art Unit 3763

/Laura A Bouchelle/
Examiner, Art Unit 3763

/Nicholas D Lucchesi/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3763